

Dartmouth Public Schools

School Committee Acceptable Use Policy

I. Purpose

The Dartmouth Public School District is providing employees and students with access to the District's electronic communication system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the District system is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people from throughout the world. Additionally, the system will be used to increase District intracommunication, enhance productivity, and assist employees in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers.

Users may not access the system for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services.

Users may not access the system for political lobbying. Employees and students may use the system to communicate with their elected representatives and to express their opinion on political issues.

The term "educational purpose" includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high quality self-discover activities.

II. District Responsibilities

The District Technology Administrator will serve as the coordinator to oversee the District system. The Technology Administrator will establish a process for setting-up individual and class accounts, set quotas for disk usage on the system, establish a retention schedule, establish a virus protection process and other necessary activities.

The building Principal and/or their designee will serve as the building-level coordinator for the system, will approve building-level activities, ensure teachers receive proper training in the use of the system and the requirements of this policy, establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of students using the system, maintain executed user agreements, and be responsible for interpreting this policy at the building level.

III. Access to the System

The District's Acceptable Use Policy will govern all use of the District system. Student use of the system will also be governed by the Student Acceptable Use Policy and the student handbook.

All employees and students will have access to the World Wide Web through the District's networked computers. Personal use of the system is restricted during school hours and should be minimized after school. Employees will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging their agreement to abide by the provisions of the District's Acceptable Use Policy. Parents may specifically request that their child(ren) be provided *independent* access via the Student Acceptable Use Policy Contract for Internet Use.

E-mail accounts will be provided only through a classroom account. An individual student account may be provided at the request of their teacher. Active employees will be provided with an individual account. Accounts will be terminated when an employee becomes inactive; i.e., retirement, separation, or termination.

Guests may receive an account with the approval of the District Technology Administrator if there is a specific, District-related purpose requiring such access. A signed agreement will be required.

IV. Parent Notification and Responsibility

The District will notify the parents about the system and the policies governing its use. Parents must sign an agreement to allow their child to independently use the Internet. The Student Acceptable Use Policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be fitting with the particular values of the families of the students. It is not practically possible for the District to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, the District recognizes that parents bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to

their children. The District will encourage parents to specify to their child(ren) what material is and is not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the District system.

V. District Limitation of Liability

The District makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the system will be error-free or without defect. A firewall/filter has been employed which is designed to screen access to inappropriate Internet sites. The operation of the firewall notwithstanding, access to any unacceptable sites is prohibited. The District will not be responsible for any damage users suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

VI. Due Process

The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning to or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the District system.

Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. If the alleged violation also involves a violation of other provisions of the student handbook, the violation will be handled in accord with the applicable provision of the student handbook.

Provision of an e-mail account to employees is a privilege and violations of the District Acceptable Use Policy will result in the suspension of access. The user will receive notification of account termination and will have an opportunity to appeal. An appeal for reinstatement must be made within ten(10) days of notification or the account and all files will be deleted.

VII. Search and Seizure

System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that the user has or is violating the District Acceptable Use Policy or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or the Acceptable Use Policy. The nature of the investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

VIII. Copyright and Plagiarism

Existing copyright law will govern the use of material accessed through the system. Because the extent of copyright protection of certain works found on the Internet is unclear, employees will make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work if their use of the material has the potential of being considered an infringement. Teachers will instruct students to respect copyright and to request permission when appropriate.

IX. District Web Site

The availability of Internet access in the Dartmouth Public Schools provides an opportunity for students and staff to contribute to the School District's presence on the World Wide Web. The district's web site provides information to the world about school curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, and other general information relating to our schools, community, and our district's mission. The following standards will govern the posting of all district sponsored web pages.

Content Standards

- All web pages must be free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- Documents may not contain objectionable material or link directly to objectionable material.

- Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity with parental permission.
- All subject matter on web pages should relate to the district or the schools within the district. Therefore, neither staff nor students may publish personal web pages as part of the district web sites, or web pages for other individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the district.
- Adherence to copyright laws is required.
- Regarding the question of quality or propriety of web page material, appearance, or content, the judgement of the Technology Administrator, building or district administrators will prevail.
- All web page data on the district server is the property of the Dartmouth Public Schools.

Student Safeguards

- Web pages may include only the first name of any student. Full student names will be allowed, with parental permission, on a credits page recognizing the students who authored the web page.
- Documents may not include any student personal information.
- Parental permission must be secured prior to publishing pictures or videos of students.

Technical Standards

Each web page added to the district web site(s) must contain certain elements that will provide general consistency for district web pages:

- At the bottom of the web page, there must be an indication of the date of the last update to that page.
- There must be a link that returns the user to the appropriate point(s) in the district web pages.
- Care must be given when creating web pages with extensive tiled backgrounds or large graphics.
- Web pages may not contain links to other pages not yet completed. If additional pages are anticipated, but not yet developed, the text that will provide such a link should be included. However, the actual link to said page(s) may not be made until the final page is actually in place on the server.
- All web pages must be given names that clearly identify them.

All web pages must be submitted to the Technology Administrator for review prior to their placement on the district server. In addition, the building administrator shall review the web page.

Information not in the public domain that is used on private web pages outside the District web site is strictly prohibited. The District will not be held responsible for any possible sites that are created outside the school day and beyond the District web site.

X. Student Acceptable Use Policy Statement and Student/Parent Contract

Through the efforts of the Dartmouth Public Schools, staff and students who have agreed to abide to the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy, have access to computers, networks and the Internet. The potential of this technology to support learning and enhance instruction is boundless. However, with such great potential also comes some prospective for abuse. It is the purpose of this Acceptable Use Policy to ensure that all who use computers through the Dartmouth Public Schools use these valuable resources in a proper manner. This policy statement represents those expectations.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computers and networks just as they are in the classroom and/or on the playground. School rules for behavior and communications as defined in the Student Handbook apply, therefore, any action that is disruptive to the educational process will not be tolerated. It is general policy that all computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The Dartmouth Public Schools will not be held liable for actions of anyone connecting to the Internet through its hook-up. Therefore, the user shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise for his/her actions. Students will be required to have parental permission for Internet use through the signing of the Contract for Internet Use form. Should a parent prefer that a student not have independent Internet access, he/she may have use of the Internet for teacher-directed classroom activities under strict teacher supervision.

Computer hardware, including peripherals such as scanners or digital cameras, will be considered instructional tools similar to a textbook. Inappropriate use such as vandalism may result in the loss of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify and destroy data of another user, Internet or network. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading of viruses, using magnets or stealing pieces of equipment. Loading software on machines without the accompanying license or administrative authority is prohibited.

Because the Internet provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users must understand that their actions may be viewed as an extension of the Dartmouth Public Schools. Transmission of any material in violation of federal, state or local regulations or representing the Dartmouth Public Schools on personal web pages without permission is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighting material or sending threatening or obscene material. Inappropriate behavior also consists of engaging in profane language, commercial activities, political lobbying, downloading insecure software or accessing inappropriate sites. Excessive activities like chatting, e-mailing, bookmarking and printing can also result in the loss of access.

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Users should not use the network in any way that would disrupt the use of the network by others, such as giving out their password, accessing another's account or attempting to access privileged accounts. Although there are expectations that all communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property; however, network managers will have access to all accounts. An individual search will be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that the user has violated the law or the Acceptable Use Policy.

Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy carry serious consequences and may result in the loss of the user's privileges, suspension from school and/or compensation for damages. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Dartmouth Public Schools and/or Town, State or Federal authorities in accordance with due process.

Contract for Internet Use Dartmouth Public Schools

I have read and understand the terms and conditions listed in the Dartmouth Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that access to the Internet is designated for educational purposes and that the Dartmouth Public Schools has taken precautions to eliminate controversial materials. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the Dartmouth Public Schools to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired.

In addition to specific, teacher-directed classroom activities, I **give** permission for my child to independently access the Internet at school. I understand that my child is ultimately responsible for his/her behavior.

Student Name

Parent Signature

Date